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# Saskatchewan

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## TRAILS AND TRACES

*of* RUPERT'S LAND AND THE  
NORTH-WEST TERRITORIES  
AS SEEN FROM 1940-1955

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NO. 1 OF A SERIES



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# About "Trails and Traces"

FIRST EDITION

In this First Edition, the author presents a picture story of parts of the North West Territories as they were observed in their early, unspoiled grandeur by the earliest explorers. These "Trails and Traces" of the intrepid people who first penetrated the immense wilderness of the Territories have been of special interest to those who wish to preserve the story of a fascinating bit of Canadian history.

The pre-Cambrian Lakes are typical, though not the actual York Factory-Winnipeg route, over the pre-Cambrian Shield. Imagination must be used wherever it has not been possible to fit the presentation exactly into time and space.

We accompany the explorers up the main channel of the Saskatchewan past the future site of Nipawin, then past the Forks, through the North Branch into northern forests, lakes and streams. Returning to the Forks, we proceed up the South Saskatchewan into the Prairie country to see two rolling, wooded and watered playgrounds in the southern part of the Province. En route, we note the temperamental, sometimes even tempestuous moods of nature on the Western Prairies.

We meet the first race of people to inhabit these areas. We must rely on Indians of the present day to depict the character, homelife, religion, occupations and means of subsistence of their early forebears as the first white settlers found them.

From Cypress Hills we follow the trail of the Royal North West Mounted Police to their new establishment at Macleod, then back (the following year) to Fort Walsh and on through Eastend in the Cypress Hills to Wood Mountain, visited twice on their first Western trek, for pemmican and oats.

We look in on Battleford, established in the third year of the R.N.W.M.P. in the West. Finally, we look in on a recent research project, the "dig" conducted by Archaeologist Boyd Wettlaufer at Mortlach, and the discovery of artifacts, rocks and bones which help piece together the story of life over the past 30 centuries in what is now Saskatchewan.

This is no complete picture of our fascinating and historic country. This small book could not do justice to so large a topic. The author hopes in the future to publish picture-stories of other "Trails and Traces" to the end that a more comprehensive record of certain aspects of "the early days" may be available.

EVERETT BAKER,  
Shaunavon, Saskatchewan.

Cover Picture: Sioux Crossing  
on the "White Mud," S.E.  
of Val Marie—1954

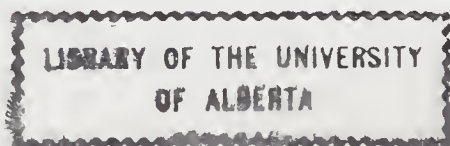
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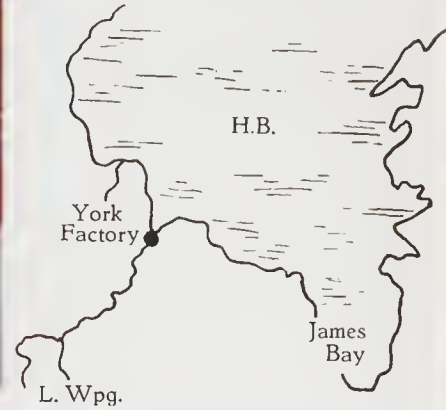


# White Man's Entry to the N.W.T.



WOLLASTON LAKE, SASK.—JUNE 21, 1946

The first white men, traders and explorers, found entrance to the N.W.T. through York Factory, on the west coast of Hudson Bay.



BEAVER LAKE, SASK.—JUNE 21, 1946



FLIN FLON—JUNE 21, 1946



LAC LA RONGE, SASK.—JUNE 22, 1946

West-North-west of their route to Winnipeg, in what is now Saskatchewan. Note the similarity in the lakes of the northern Pre-Cambrian Shield.



# The North Country



NIPAWIN—SEPTEMBER 27, 1946

Up the swift-flowing waters of the Saskatchewan, carrying the waters of two large rivers from their beginnings in the Rockies, the intrepid voyageurs—and later, the big Hudson's Bay Company steamboats—fought their way.

Past the Forks of the two rivers, up the North Branch, West—then Southwest past future Fort Carleton and Northwest Denholm, to the present Denholm ferry.

DENHOLM—AUGUST 17, 1944



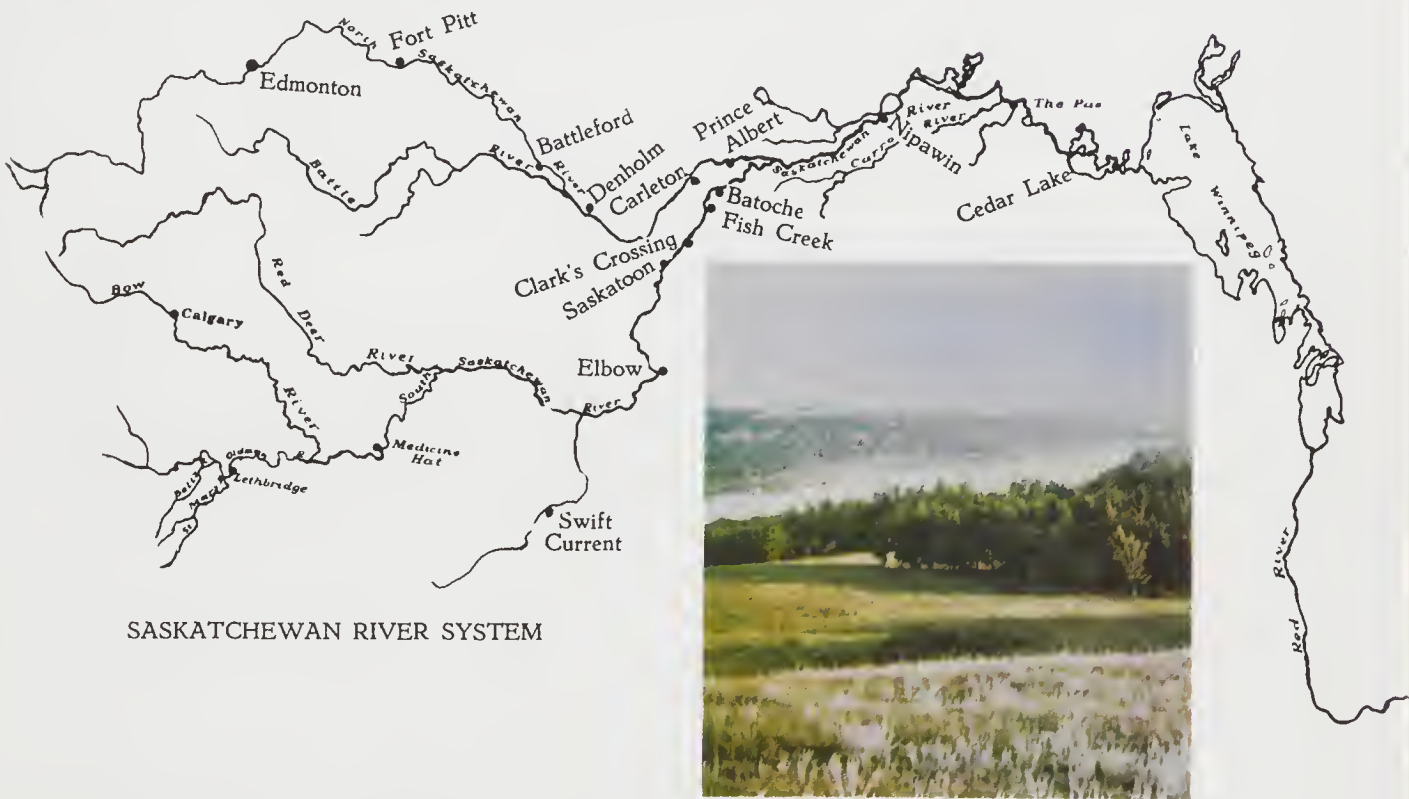


# Saskatchewan River



Ice, high on the banks of Battle River, after the receding waters of a "jam" have been released into the North Saskatchewan, a mile or so, further down.

BATTLEFORD—APRIL 13, 1943



SASKATCHEWAN RIVER SYSTEM

Past the future old Fort Pitt, another hundred miles N.W.—toward Edmonton.

N. Sask R.; N. of Fort Pitt

FRENCHMAN BUTTE—AUGUST 15, 1945



# Land of Forests



The North Saskatchewan leads through wide vistas of beautiful timber, such as we find in the Meadow Lake Forest Reserve.

MEADOW LAKE—OCTOBER 1, 1948



NATURE'S CATHEDRAL

MEADOW LAKE FOREST RESERVE

OCTOBER 2, 1941

WHEN MAN COMES—HE STARTS A FIRE

DORINTOSH—MAY 25, 1942







MEADOW LAKE FOREST RESERVE  
OCTOBER 1, 1948



# Lakes



LOON LAKE—SEPTEMBER 10, 1944



LOON LAKE—SEPTEMBER 4, 1944





LOON LAKE—SEPTEMBER 26, 1943



LOON LAKE—SEPTEMBER 27, 1944

# *Lakes and Seasons*



OLD FORT PITT—SEPTEMBER 27, 1947



WASKESIU—JUNE 19, 1946



WASKESIU—JUNE 18, 1946





WASKESIU—JUNE 18, 1946



WASKESIU—JUNE 18, 1946



WASKESIU—JULY 19, 1949



# Prairie Streams



DEER CREEK

DEER CREEK, SASK.

AUGUST 14, 1945



ASSINIBOINE RIVER

McNUTT, SASK.

SEPTEMBER 2, 1949

DEER CREEK

DEER CREEK, SASK.

AUGUST 14, 1945

# Up South Saskatchewan River



Returning to the Forks, we proceed upstream on the South Saskatchewan — looking back to where Batoche will be, inside the U, in the distance, to the right.

BATOCHE—JUNE 27, 1953



BATOCHE—OCTOBER 1, 1948



On up past the future Fish Creek—all along from here, north, past Batoche, the halfbreeds from the Red River will again lay out their land in "river lots," 10 chains (40 rods) wide to possibly two miles deep.

FISH CREEK—OCTOBER 1, 1948



FISH CREEK—OCTOBER 1, 1948



On south past the future home of Polish Canadians, baking new bread in the old way.

FISH CREEK—SEPTEMBER 23, 1950





## Old Landmarks



Within a dozen miles of what, further on, will be Saskatoon.  
SUTHERLAND—SEPTEMBER 28, 1948



Then south to "the Elbow" and southwest to a famous river crossing, to be known as "Saskatchewan Landing."

LOOKING NORTH—JULY 9, 1952



# The Prairie Country



The South Saskatchewan led into the heart of the Canadian prairies—a vast expanse extending two to three hundred miles north from the 49th parallel and a thousand miles, in length, from “the Red” to the Rockies.

Grass and water were the life of its grazing wild animals and, indirectly, of its coyotes, wolves and bears—also of the wild men who roved incessantly after the animals, in the search for an almost exclusive diet of meat.

CYPRESS HILLS—SOUTH FORK—JUNE 27, 1954

Much of the prairie was broken and rolling. Here a spring-fed mountain stream meanders through a lovely basin, part of a valley, in the Cypress Hills.

LITTLE FRENCHMAN CREEK—EASTEND—SEPTEMBER 15, 1952







The Carlyle Lakes and Cypress Hills areas, partially wooded, permitted a wild, free, open life, in surroundings of great natural beauty—marvelous playgrounds for the southeast and southwest corners of the future Saskatchewan—for future generations on the plains.

CYPRESS HILLS—SOUTH FORK—JUNE 23, 1951

Cypress Mountains they were called by the early Canadians, who called big hills “mountains” and large ponds “lakes.” They abounded in elk and grizzly bear.

CYPRESS HILLS—SOUTH FORK—OCTOBER 9, 1954







Forest areas comparable with those above the timber line, 300 miles further north, were frequent at the Carlyle Lakes and in the Cypress Hills.

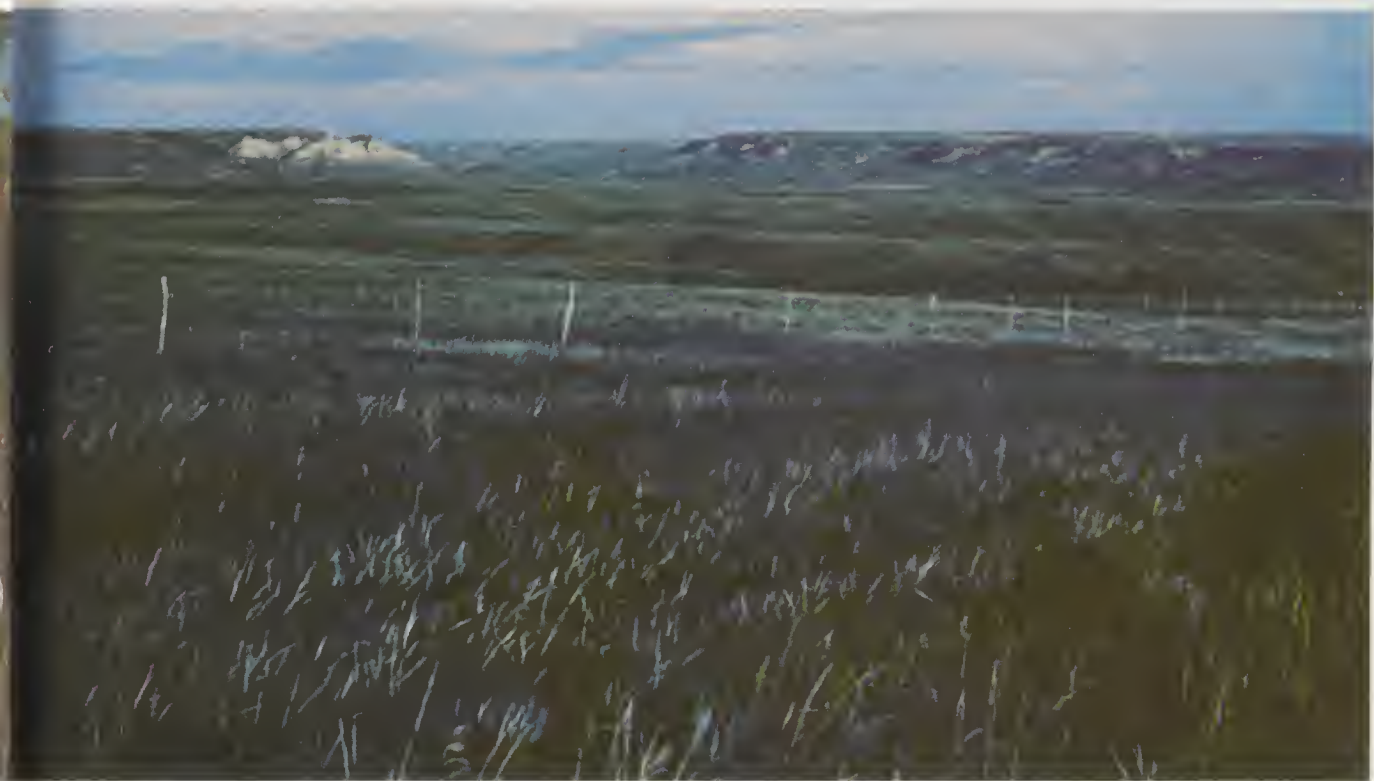
CYPRESS HILLS—MAPLE CREEK—JUNE 26, 1948

Reminiscent of early explorers are the Boy Scout tents at prairie Lac Pelletier.

JULY 8, 1950







t No roads, no fences, in the beginning, only grass, rain-washed and sunlit, on the rolling landscape.  
Vastness reaching into infinity as days merged into weeks in crossing the trackless, but everchanging, scene.

SUMMER—RAVENSCRAG—SEPTEMBER 1, 1950

Trees on the hillside,  
Stream down below—

CYPRESS HILLS—SOUTH FORK—JUNE 27, 1954





Only glimpses of wild animals, or fleeting horsemen. Only wide spaces, with never a sign of permanent habitation—but a high, dry atmosphere for exhilaration—wide horizons, with gorgeous sun effects, of inspiration—grasses that cure on the stem with a golden glow. The virgin prairie. Her days can be murderous. They can be divinely fair.

RAVENSCRAG—OCTOBER 15, 1950



Grasses for the buffalo  
shelter from the snow.

MOOSE JAW WILD ANIMAL PARK—AUGUST 21, 1943





LAND OF WIND

MANKOTA— AUGUST 26, 1942



LIGHTNING

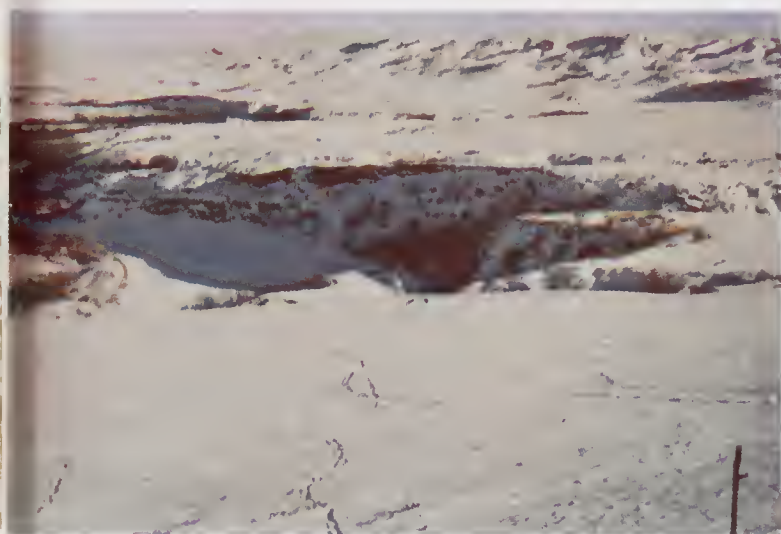
ADMIRAL—  
AUGUST 14, 1954

# *The Temperamental Prairies*



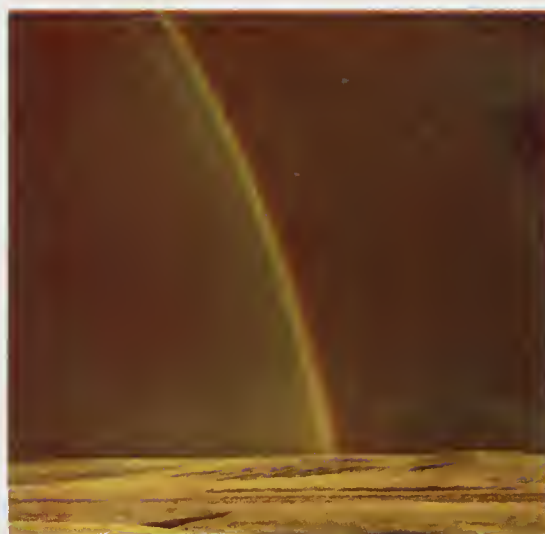
HAIL

MANKOTA— AUGUST 26, 1942



SNOW

CLIMAX—JANUARY 14, 1949



RAINBOWS  
AND SUNSHINE

GLENTWORTH—  
AUGUST 7, 1954

# Water and Moonlight



The prairie's "Swift Current" flowed from springs in the Cypress Hills, through the future Duncair Reservoir and the coming city of Swift Current, opposite the future Matador Ranch (1905), into the South Saskatchewan, about a dozen miles east of Saskatchewan Landing.

CARMICHAEL—JULY 5, 1953

"The Great Lone Land"—The far-flung solitudes of the prairies.

SENATE—SEPTEMBER 14, 1951





# The People Were Indians

## INDIANS ARE PEOPLE

August 22, 1872—the first day west from Fort Pitt—two Indians, evidently Chiefs, approached the Sanford Fleming Expedition and riding up to our Chief with all the grace of gentlemen of the old regime, extended their hands. Being invited to ride on with us, they bowed with an ease and self possession any of us might have envied—they were really handsome fellows—handsomer than any of us



FOUR MILES NORTH OF THE WATERHEN—DORINTOSH—JUNE 18, 1940

"After supper one of our party, lolling lazily on a hillock, happened to stretch out his long legs between the two and the big open fire. In an undertone the Chief (Fleming) called his attention to the undesigned rudeness. 'Oh,' said he, 'they'll never mind.' And certainly they smoked on and looked as though they saw not.

" 'They will not say anything, but they will mind, and not forget,' quietly remarked Mr. McDougal. The long legs were withdrawn."

—From "'Ocean to Ocean," by Geo. M. Grant—P163

August 21, 1945—73 years later—Cree Chief Peetkukuk, Charlie Trottier and I were having dinner at the restaurant in Paradise Hill. After a pow-wow of eight, or ten, the night before, the two had spent the night in an old shack and had been given breakfast on invitation of a neighbor. They had not been pleased with either the accommodation, or the food. I noticed their host had addressed them in a sort of a pidgin-Indian dialect.

CHAS. TROTTIER AND CHIEF PEETKUKUK—DEER CREEK—AUGUST 21, 1945



Said I: "I've kept you an extra day over the time arranged. How much more should I pay you?"

The two spoke in Cree. Then Charlie, acting as interpreter, said, "You've treated us like one of yourselves. You can pay us just whatever you please."

—E. B.



# Life on the Reserve



Mother makes bannock. Neighbor boy gets smile from eldest girl.

SWEETGRASS RESERVE—BATTLEFORD—JUNE 7, 1942



Baby in moss-bag. Boy tries ice cream

NORTH BATTLEFORD—AUGUST 12, 1943



Bannock for dinner.

CRAIG LAKE—JUNE 27, 1941



Fresh meat for dinner—"Wapuss," the rabbit.

CRAIG LAKE—JUNE 27, 1941



Indian Ladies' Aid.

CRAIG LAKE—JUNE 27, 1941



Proud—Camera-shy.

NORTH BATTLEFORD—AUGUST 12, 1943



# Religion



POLES OF THE THIRST DANCE LODGE

Steadily, day and night, when the poplar leaves were out in full, you could hear the 3-day pum, pum, pum of the drum, accompanied, at times, with a high-pitched, weird, human staccato, like nothing else you ever heard.

WEST OF LOON LAKE—AUGUST 21, 1944



## GIFTS TO THE MANITOU

"The Great Spirit," represented by capped, calico-draped post near the center—as found near Thirst Dance Lodge, a month or so after the Annual (May or June) Ceremonial of sacrifice and propitiation.

OVER THE WATERHEN RIVER  
DORINTOSH—AUGUST 8, 1942

## SWEAT HOUSE FRAMES

Numerous, near Thirst Dance Lodges, were made of woven willows, 10 or 12 feet in length, or longer.

WEST OF LOON LAKE—MAY 24, 1942



Covered with buffalo hide, or blankets, water sprinkled on heated stones gave participants a washed-out feeling—it was carried to the point of extreme enervation, to go with the ceremonial speeches and singing.

LOON LAKE—OCTOBER 11, 1944



CHIEF'S BIRCH BARK CANOE

LOON LAKE—OCTOBER 29, 1943





# Indian Ways of Life



TRAPPING  
Prairie wolves—Mastad Brothers.  
McCORD—AUGUST 11, 1950



HUNTING  
Kit fox coup stick. John LeCarr.  
WOOD MOUNTAIN—MAY 20, 1951



FREIGHTING  
Harry Ford's Red River Carts.  
REGINA—NOVEMBER 11, 1954



FISHING  
No buffalo for pemmican?  
The Indians dried fish.  
LOON LAKE—APRIL 30, 1944



# Indian Meat



MULE DEER  
LOOMIS—SEPTEMBER 24, 1954



BAMBI  
SOUTH FORK  
JULY 3, 1954



PORCUPINE  
LOON LAKE—AUGUST 21, 1944



CANADA GEESE  
MADGE LAKE—KAMSACK  
SEPTEMBER 14, 1949



WILD DUCK'S NEST  
MATADOR CO-OP FARM  
MAY 15, 1948



# Berries



BUFFALO BERRIES  
WHITE MUD VALLEY—CLIMAX  
SEPTEMBER 7, 1950



LOW BUSH CRANBERRIES  
LOON LAKE—SEPTEMBER 29, 1946

BLUEBERRY PICKERS' CAMP—LOON LAKE  
AUGUST 26, 1944





# Native Flowers



PRAIRIE LILIES—SASKATCHEWAN'S PROVINCIAL FLOWER EMBLEM—ELFROS—JULY 13, 1947



WILD ROSES—ALBERTA'S PROVINCIAL FLOWER EMBLEM—NORTH BATTLEFORD—JUNE 15, 1942



# *Native Flowers*



WILD ASTERS AND GOLDENROD—FRENCHMAN BUTTE—AUGUST 14, 1945



WILD SUNFLOWERS—WOOD MOUNTAIN—AUGUST 4, 1954



## *The Country was Lawless*



BATTLE CREEK, CYPRESS HILLS SHAMBLES—SOUTH OF OLD FORT WALSH—JULY 4, 1948

Like the "Custer Massacre" of the "Little Big Horn" in June, 1876, the "Cypress Hills Massacre" in May, 1873, is now regarded by many students as having been less a massacre than a fight. The evidence against the Fort Benton "wolfers," even in a Winnipeg court, June 23, 1876, was not sufficient to convict. "Whiskey," said Chief Justice Wood, "was the real culprit."

Here a band of possibly three dozen Indians—men, women and children—on this side of Battle Creek, were practically annihilated by French-Anglo-American wolf hunters, who first assembled at Farwell's store, to the right, across the creek.

The wolfers' horses had been stolen. The Indians, apparently innocent, were under suspicion. This, added to heavy drinking on both sides, and a situation already tense from other causes, precipitated the shambles that Sunday afternoon, that, more than any other incident, shocked the country into a realization that "each a law unto himself" was not sufficient. This, after the Hudson's Bay Company had relinquished its sovereignty in 1869 and before the "Mounties" came.

Inter-tribal wars and the insecurity of the hunter's life had kept Indian population in bounds, but the white man's whiskey and small-pox threatened the very existence of the natives in the 1870's.



# *Came the North-West Mounted Police*

MOUNTED  
REGINA—JULY 6, 1947



ON FOOT  
REGINA—NOVEMBER 7, 1954



WITH CANOE  
LAC LA RONGE—JUNE 21, 1946



# *Starting from U.S. Boundary, South of Winnipeg*

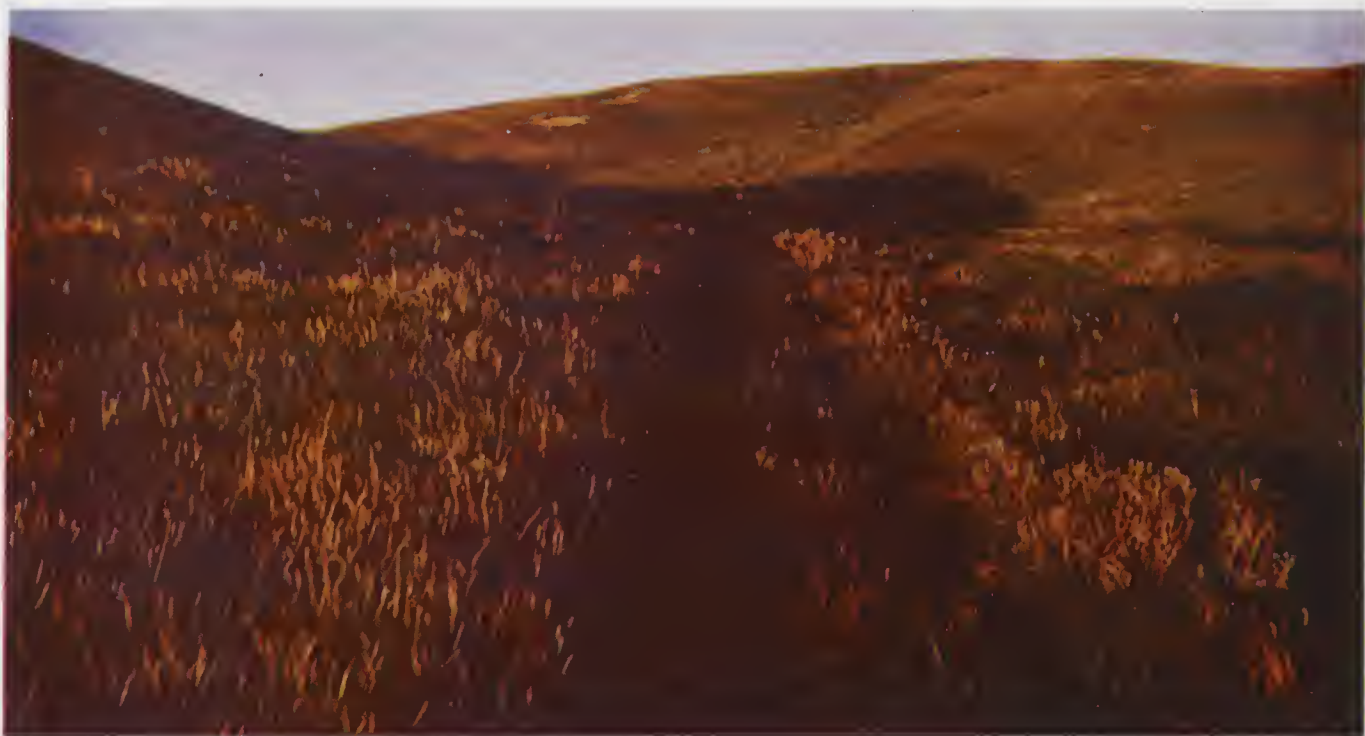


ROCHE PERCEE—BY KEN MURRAY—AUGUST 27, 1953

July 8, 1874—the N.W.M.P. left Fort Dufferin with 275 men for the long march, 310 horses, 142 oxen and 93 cattle for slaughter, 114 Red River carts, 73 wagons—guns, mowers, forges, field kitchens.

At Roche Percee, 270 miles from Dufferin, most of Troop A was split off and sent, by Fort Ellice, more directly, to Edmonton. The Force camped on the Souris River, about half a mile from this rock.

Winding through the hills against the afternoon sun, down this sweaty, mosquito-infested westward trail they came—Col. Geo. A. French and his original Mounties, in a caravan stretching back sometimes several miles. It was August 24, 1874. That evening they arrived at the high banks of the Swift Current—some 10 miles west—in the moonlight.



No. 1 POLICE TRAIL—A MILE AND A HALF SOUTH OF LAC PELLETIER—JUNE 22, 1954

## Westward to Fort McLeod



OLD MAN RIVER—NORTH OF TABER, ALTA.—JULY 20, 1951

An island in Old Man River, near Taber, Alta., but not the one where Troops B, C and F found journey's end on land surrounded by a wide curve in the river . . . an island during high water only.

It was called Fort Macleod, in honor of the Assistant Commissioner. Scout Jerry Potts led the way. Cottonwoods were there for building. Buffalo were near for meat. Arrival October 13th, 1874.

At times the Island flooded, especially in 1879, and in 1884, Police moved into new barracks, some two to three miles up-stream, on the bank above the River, at the west end of present Macleod. Here is seen the last remnant of the second Fort Macleod.



LAST OF SECOND MOUNTED POLICE BARRACKS—MACLEOD, ALTA.—JULY 21, 1951





OLD M.P. TRAIL OF '82 INTO OLD FORT WALSH—MAPLE CREEK—JUNE 14, 1953



SIMILAR OLD M.P. TRAIL OF '85 INTO OLD FORT PITT—FRENCHMAN BUTTE—OCTOBER 1, 1947



Back, about 160 miles east from Fort Macleod, Scout Jerry Potts led Supt. J. M. Walsh and 30 men of Troop B to establish Fort Walsh, two miles north of the "massacre" of two years before. In six weeks from arrival, June 7, 1875, Fort and Palisades had been constructed. Palisades three feet in the ground and twelve feet above. Inclosure approximately 200 by 300 feet.

OLD FORT, 1875-1882—MAPLE CREEK—JULY 4, 1948

# Old Fort Walsh



Gabriel Leveille. His father was Walsh's favorite scout. Gabriel still lives in the hills—was an eye-witness of Walsh in its hey-day—he was then 14.

OLD FORT WALSH—AUGUST 26, 1948

All that remains of the Village of perhaps 1100 people—until 1882. I. G. Baker and Company and T. C. Power and Brother, Fort Benton firms, were the leading merchants. They took in some 20,000 buffalo hides in 1879—a little over 500 in 1880.

Fort Benton freighting outfits were three big wagons, hooked together, drawn by eight or ten yoke of Oxen, or strung-out horses, or mules. Ten or more outfits like this were called a wagon train.

There was a race track, football and cricket field and a tennis court over at the Fort.

ABOVE PICTURE—JUNE 14, 1953



PART OF RECONSTRUCTED OLD FORT WALSH—JUNE 14, 1953



# The Buttes at Eastend and Pinto Horse



There was a Hudson's Bay trading post here at Chimney Coulee, six miles north of the White Mud River, in 1872. The post was built along the coulee, rather than in the usual Hudson's Bay square. An East-end M.P. Detachment, under Fort Walsh, had as many as eight men stationed here, when Sitting Bull was to be watched, on the White Mud, in 1879.

EASTEND—AUGUST 14, 1949

But Sitting Bull's favorite resort, with upwards of 4000 Sioux refugees and thousands of horses, when brought together, was in and around the Pinto Horse Buttes, back of Norman Thompson and Joe Whiteford, in the picture—also, a few miles to the right, on the White Mud, near the Boundary. They went east to Wood Mountain to trade. The men are standing on the 175-mile Police Trail, Wood Mountain to Fort Walsh, some 20 miles northeast of present Val Marie.

MAY 6, 1954



# Wood Mountain



Isaac Cowie tells of visiting a Hudson's Bay Trading Post at Wood Mountain in 1868. Commissioner French purchased log buildings from the Boundary Commission and left two sub-constables there for the winter, on October 7, 1874. Above is the location of the first home of the Mounted Police at Wood Mountain. The gate was between the two people in the center. The outside people are at previous corners of the palisades, just above Wood Mountain Creek. Later the Post was moved southeast about 300 yards to more space and higher land.

Macleod, Fort Walsh and Wood Mountain carried the heavy load in police work during the Sioux-Nez Perce invasion, 1876-'81.

WOOD MOUNTAIN—AUGUST 7, 1954

Wanbi-Sun-Win (Eagle Plume), last survivor of the Sitting Bull refugees of '76-'77.

WOOD MOUNTAIN—AUGUST 7, 1954





## Mixed Blood



CHIEF JOHN LeCAINE, FARMER-WRITER, WOOD MOUNTAIN, MAY 20, 1950

Colorful Bill Ogle, Cannington Manor, 1888, Montana and Wood Mountain rancher thereafter is gone, but his son Jim, English father and Sioux mother, carries on. Mrs. Ogle is a sister of John LeCaine.

WOOD MOUNTAIN—AUGUST 7, 1954





# Wood Mountain People



MRS. JOHN LeCAINE, WOOD MOUNTAIN—AUGUST 7, 1954



Billy Brown and his blind wife, on whom he lavishes the tenderest care. Billy's father was a friend and associate of Bill Ogle and like him found a Sioux girl for a wife. Judging from the result, Billy must have chosen good parents.

WOOD MOUNTAIN—AUGUST 7, 1954



# Fort Battleford



Fort Battleford was established, with the aid of Sub-Inspector Frechette, by Supt. Jas. Walker, mid-summer, 1876. It was the year of the Carleton-Fort Pitt Indian Treaty No. 6. Carleton and Fort Pitt came under the Battleford Superintendency.

The buildings almost went the way of those at Fort Ellice, Wood Mountain and Fort Walsh, Carleton and Fort Pitt. Above are the Commandant's and Inspector's houses, which were within the palisades of the old Fort that sheltered several hundred refugees during the Rebellion. In the Inspector's house is the Orderly Room where the Frog Lake Indians were tried and condemned.

BATTLEFORD—APRIL 13, 1943

The Provincial Department of Natural Resources came to the rescue and restored these buildings, along with the horse hospital and the guard room, as you see in the picture below. The Federal Government has taken over the project as an Indian Museum and N.W.M.P. Memorial.

BATTLEFORD—SEPTEMBER 21, 1947



# Archaeological Research



We started this picture book with a journey down across Pre-Cambrian lakes to the Saskatchewan River system. We pushed up its waters into amazing variety and beauty—into the heart of "Saskatchewan." We've noted people as well as places. We've watched the N.W.M.P., with courage and energy, bring law and order to the wilderness.

Now the archaeologists, the Boyd Wettlaufers at Mortlach, take us back all of 30 centuries, to discover what manner of men lived here then.

Above: Stratigraphy—13 different zones, the bottom dating back 3400 years.

Below: Specimens from different zones—different periods.

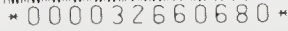
MORTLACH—SEPTEMBER 11, 1954







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